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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 THE HAGUE 001121

SIPDIS

SECSTATE FOR ECA/PE/V/F/E- EILEEN CONNOLLY/DONNA GRIFFITH;
INFO EUR/PD-BRIAN GUSS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OEXC](#) [SCUL](#) [NL](#)

SUBJECT: EVALUATION FOR FY-2004 VOLVIS ELECTION PROGRAM FOR
YOUNG POLITICAL LEADERS

Following is post's evaluation for the voluntary visitor
program on the elections for the four Young Political Leaders
from the Netherlands, in EVDB format.

START FIXED-FORMAT TEXT (PLEASE DO NOT EDIT):

: The following data is in a fixed format which enables
: automated processing in Washington and should not be
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EXPORT-SOURCE: POST-EVDB

VERSION: 3.0.7

POST-EMAIL: dankelmanE@state.gov

TRANSMITTING-POST: PAS The Hague

TRANSMITTING-POST-ID: 4276

EXPORT-TYPE: PROJECT EVALUATION

START PROJECT-EVAL-REC:

POST-PROJ-ID: 143

ECA-PROJ-NO:

PROJ-NAME: Election Program for Young Political Leaders

CPTHEME: Mutual Understanding

START MEMO IMPACT:

The group said that the program gave them a more nuanced and positive perception of the U.S. They were surprised to discover that Americans are not consumed by the role of the U.S. in international affairs as are Europeans. They learned much about the U.S. electoral system at all levels, but were also surprised that the primaries involved only a very small percentage of the population. The fact that campaigning in the U.S. is more focused on persons than on issues was noted, but at the same time they realized that the focus in the Netherlands is changing as well to personality-driven politics. All of them said that they feel they have a better understanding of U.S. democracy, although one of them was shocked by poverty. "They want it for the whole world," she said, "but look at the reality - the poverty." The Young Democrat representative felt that the U.S. is more conservative in its values than Europeans, but he also had a better understanding of these values.

Besides their professional program, the group spent most evenings with their peers. They all agreed that meeting and talking to young people was so important. They were fascinated by the ability of campaigns to attract young people as volunteers and the professionalism of grassroots campaigning.

This program advanced the MPP goal of encouraging greater understanding of the U.S. by young Dutch leaders.

END MEMO IMPACT:

START MEMO AUDIENCE-REACHED:

Two of the four participants kept "blogs" during the visit. The Young Socialist's blog alone had more than 4,500 visitors. All four reported back on the trip to their respective parties and plan to draw on it in discussions about the U.S. and campaign techniques. All four have invited Ambassador Sobel to address their annual meetings later this year. They also plan to meet on a regular basis despite coming from four different parties. For example, they have already decided to host a combined "Election Night" event on November 2 and have asked the Ambassador to join them.

END MEMO AUDIENCE-REACHED:

ECA-PROGRAM-OFFICE-RATING: 5

START MEMO ECA-PROG-OFFICE-COMMENT:

The leaders of the youth wings of the four major political parties in the Netherlands were unanimous in their praise for the program that Donna Griffith of the Africa/Europe Branch in the Office of International Visitors arranged. The program introduced them to three levels of policy making, federal, state and local. They felt that they had been able to explain to their interlocutors the Dutch situation, and found people willing to listen and to answer their questions. For future programs with similar groups, they recommend another meeting or two focused on foreign policy.

They managed to arrange a tour of Capitol Hill through someone they met, adding that it was definitely worth including this in any future program. They also recommended including a think tank in the program. By chance they met someone from the Cato Institute, and had a very good discussion with him.

They mentioned that the meeting with the Young Republicans in

Austin did not work out, but they all agreed that the overall program was very well balanced.

END MEMO ECA-PROG-OFFICE-COMMENT:
PROGRAM-AGENCY-RATING: 0
START MEMO PROG-AGENCY-COMMENT:

END MEMO PROG-AGENCY-COMMENT:
START ESCORT-INTERPRETER-EVALUATION:
ESCORT-INTERPRETER: Alpha Berry
RATING: 5

START MEMO COMMENT:
All four of them said that they were very happy with their ELO. He was always there, but never pushed himself forward. At first he only joined them for their professional program, but they soon got along very well, and he went along in the evenings as well. They said they had nice discussions with him, but he never pushed an opinion.

END MEMO COMMENT:
END ESCORT-INTERPRETER-EVALUATION:
END PROJECT-EVAL-REC:
Sobel